

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of this application are respectfully requested. Claims 2-4, 8-10, 14-16, and 20-22 are cancelled. Claims 1, 5-7, 11-13, 17-19, and 23-25 remain in this application and, as amended herein, are submitted for the Examiner's reconsideration.

In the Office Action, claim 25 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. Claim 25 has been amended to correct the informality. It is therefore submitted that claim 25 is in full compliance with the requirements of 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph.

Turning now to the art rejection, the Examiner rejected claims 1, 5-7, 11-13, 17-19, and 23-25 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Fukushima (European Patent Application No. 0,979,003). Applicants submit that the claims are patentably distinguishable over Fukushima.

For example, amended claim 1 calls for:

the control signal including a setting value associated with a particular image contrast such that if the setting value would require said illumination controlling means to lower the illumination brightness to be below the predetermined range, said illumination controlling means instead maintains the illumination brightness within the predetermined range and said level adjustment means lowers the luminance signal level according to the setting value until the particular image contrast associated with the setting value is attained. (Emphasis added.)

The sections of Fukushima that are relied on by the Examiner do not disclose or suggest that if a setting value of a control signal would require an illumination controlling means to lower the illumination brightness to be below a predetermined range, the illumination controlling means instead maintains the illumination brightness within the predetermined range.

Rather, the relied-on sections of Fukushima describe:

In the display unit 20, on the other hand, the contrast and the brightness of the picture appearing on the liquid-crystal display panel 23a are suppressed and the brightness of the illumination provided by the back-light 23b is reduced so that, as a result, the picture becomes darker properly for the circumference.

Accordingly, even in a dark circumference, it is possible to display a picture which is dark and has low contrast with the back-light 23b adjusted to darkness properly for the circumference so that the picture can be seen with ease without dazzling the eyes. (Emphasis added.)

(See ¶¶ [0061]-[0062].)

Though the relied-on sections of Fukushima teach suppressing the brightness of the picture appearing on the liquid-crystal display panel, the reference only describes reducing the back-light according to the darkness of the circumference. The relied-on sections of the reference neither disclose nor suggest instead maintaining the illumination brightness within a predetermined range.

The Examiner nevertheless contends that "...if the illumination means is off, then the image can not be seen on the display..." Namely, the Examiner presupposes that Fukushima addresses the problem described and remedied in the present application. (See, e.g., p.3 ll.2-9). However, as shown in the above excerpt of the reference, the relied-on sections of Fukushima do not at all describe the problem of not being able to maintain a stable discharge when the back-light illumination is reduced below a predetermined range. Instead, the relied-on section of the reference merely teaches reducing the back-light according to the darkness of the circumference without at all being concerned with what occurs should the back-light be too greatly reduced.

The Examiner then concludes that "in order to optimize the image signal for the brightness of the circumference[,] the level adjustment means must further reduce the brightness and

contrast if the desired contrast is not met." However, because the relied-on sections of Fukushima do not disclose or suggest instead maintaining the illumination brightness within a predetermined range, a person of ordinary skill in the relevant art could not deduce the Examiner's conclusion without knowing the teachings of the present application.

It follows that the relied-on sections of Fukushima do not do not disclose or suggest the combination defined in claim 1 and hence do not anticipate the claim.

Claims 5-6 depend from claim 1 and are distinguishable over the cited art for at least the same reasons.

Independent claims 7, 13, and 19 each include limitations similar to those of claim 1. Therefore, each of claims 7, 13, and 19 is patentably distinguishable over Fukushima for at least the same reasons.

Claims 11-12 depend from claim 7, claims 17-18 depend from claim 13, and claims 23-25 depend from claim 19. Therefore, each of claims 11-12, 17-18, and 23-25 is distinguishable over the cited art for at least the same reasons as the claim from which it depends.

Applicants therefore respectfully request the withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102(b) and 112, second paragraph.

In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the outstanding rejection of the claims and to pass this application to issue. If, however, for any reason the Examiner does not believe that such action can be taken at this time, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner telephone applicant's attorney at (908) 654-5000 in order to overcome any additional objections which the Examiner might have.

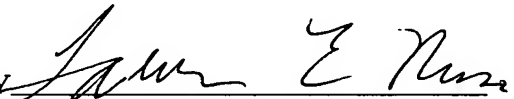
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If there are any additional charges in connection with this requested amendment, the Examiner is authorized to charge Deposit Account No. 12-1095 therefor.

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Respectfully submitted,

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